

# homework 5

Semantics 3, UCLA Linguistics

due May 2, 2022

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Study Schwarzschild's (2006) empirical generalization about the (non-)monotonicity restrictions on attributive MPs and MPs in pseudopartitives, also summarized in this week's handout and reading. While you might be interested in Schwarzschild's theoretical explanation of these semantic alternations, it might not be relevant for this assignment, so you shouldn't feel like you need to study the proposal.

Note also Schwarzschild's observation that quantity words (*many*, *much*, *few*, *little*, and their cross-linguistic counterparts) require monotonicity. And there is wide-spread consensus, beginning with Bresnan 1973, that English *more* decomposes morphologically into *many/much* and *-er*. You can complete this version of the homework either on English or on some other language (as long as you have access to a fluent speaker of that language, of course). If you're working on another language, I recommend starting by replicating or attempting to replicate Schwarzschild's English data in your language, so you can get a feel for how to craft these data.

- (i) Examine two comparative constructions with quantity words – one with *more* and one with one of its negative-antonym counterparts, *less* – and argue, for each one, whether or not they comply with Schwarzschild's generalization (and why you think that).
  - (ii) Do the same thing with the equative (this time, with one construction involving either *as many as* or *as much as*, and another involving *as little as*. Do the same empirical conclusions apply to these constructions? Explain your answer.
  - (iii) Given what you know about this dimension of measurement monotonicity phenomenon, does it seem like a polysemy or ambiguity? Does it seem like a semantic phenomenon or a syntactic phenomenon? Explain your answer.
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Credit where credit is due: **mass and monotonicity**

Bale, Schwarz, and Shanks. 2021. Monotonicity revisited: mass nouns and comparisons of purity. *Journal of Semantics* 38(4): 681-708.